UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1940

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "AMERICAN DIETS--GOOD AND BAD." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Today, I'm bringing you some news about a serious problem that we're all thinking about these days....national defense, and what you and I can do about it.

Of course, we're all anxious to do our share to make America strong. But we don't all realize that we can do our part through good nutrition.....in choosing our daily food, or in planning meals for the family.

Dr. Hazel Stiebeling--food economist in the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture--states the idea clearly. This is what she says--"By eating the food we need for good nutrition we can help to make America strong.....ready for whatever lies ahead.

"Food is part of our strategy at home in peace time. The right food and enough of it--that is, a good diet for every man, woman, and child builds strength for the present and the future."

But the right food and enough of it is a big order. For we don't all have good diets now. In fact, Dr. Stiebeling explains that one third of us are below the safety line in nutrition. That's a hard fact to face--but it shows how much there is for us to do.

Millions of us don't have enough money to buy a good diet. Millions more of us spend enough for food--but we still don't buy the right food values.

If we're going to buy good nutrition cheaply--we have to plan carefully. Dr. Stiebeling suggests two practical ideas. First--plan your meals for about a week ahead and make out your market lists at the same time. That's the best way to make

your meals fit together into a balanced diet. And second-- keep a record of how you spend your food money so you can see whether you're getting the right balance between different food groups.

If you live in the city--you can have a good diet by spending as little as two to three dollars a week for each person in the family. To keep down your food costs ....watch for foods in season and notice price trends. Take advantage of weekend bargains. Study labels and compare quality as well as weights and prices.

If you live on a farm--your food costs can be quite a bit lower. You can probably have a cow and chickens to produce milk and eggs--two important protective foods that take a good slice out of the food budget if you have to buy them. Your garden is another step towards good nutrition. In warm climates, a winter garden solves the problem of getting fresh vegetables throughout the year. But in other sections, you can or store the summer surplus for winter use.

Now let's go back to Dr. Stiebeling's suggestions. She says that a knowledge of nutrition is absolutely essential in planning good diets. When you go to the grocery store--you can't expect to find the food labeled according to the vitamins and minerals it contains. But you will know which foods to choose--if you carry your own knowledge of food values with you.

Dr. Stiebeling goes on to say that shopping for food values is only half the problem. You must also be a good cook to see that none of the vitamins and minerals are lost in the kitchen.

Don't forget that vegetables lose food values when they're stored too long. Dairy products and meat are in danger of spoilage if they're not kept cold.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are especially important in the well-balanced diet. Get in the habit of serving fresh fruit for breakfast and also as a time-saving dessert. Serve raw vegetables in salads--or cut them in narrow strips to make a

crunchy relish. When you cook vegetables--remember that short cooking in a small amount of water cuts down the loss of vitamins and minerals.

If you're interested in a short cut method of planning balanced meals --you'll want a copy of the Bureau of Home Economics bulletin, "Diets to Fit the Family Income." You can use this bulletin as a dependable guide and be sure that you're giving your family the right food. It contains several different diet plans--and there's one that will fit your family income, whether it is large or small.

Besides giving diet plans, the bulletin has some other helpful information on common food problems.....How to spend your food money to best advantage. How foods differ in nutritive value. Which foods are the most important. How much milk does the family need? How to make out a market list. How to plan meals. Do the children need as much food as their parents?

You'll be glad to know that this bulletin is free. All you have to do is send a postcard to the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C. --and ask for the Bulletin, "Diets to Fit the Family Income."

And there we have some of the highlights in the story of good nutrition and national defense. I hope that I've given you at least one practical idea of what you can do towards making America strong.

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